ChessGenius Pro

Operation Manual for M815 – ChessGenius Pro

Extended version V1.00

1. Inserting batteries & starting the computer the first time

Place the device upside-down on a flat surface. You will see the battery compartment on the underside of the device.

- Open the battery compartment by sliding its lid in the direction of the arrow.
- Insert four AA batteries (R6/LR6) into the compartment, paying attention to the polarity: the "positive" terminal of each battery, labelled "+", must match up with a "+" inside the battery compartment.
- Close the battery compartment.
- Make sure that the computer's ON/OFF switch is set to ON. You will find this switch on the underside of the unit below row 8 of the chessboard, next to the input for the power adaptor.
- The computer will now start automatically.

Note: if the red "low battery" symbol appears in the bottom line of the LCD (liquid crystal display), the batteries should be replaced as soon as convenient.

Alternatively ChessGenius can be powered by a mains adaptor with a centre positive plug and maximum 5V output. The socket for the plug is on the underside at the rear, next to the ON/OFF switch. The suitable M811 Power Supply can be bought at computerchess.com or via the retailer from whom you bought your chess computer.

2. Choose the language for the screen text

Once the batteries are correctly inserted, the computer gives a characteristic sound signal, and the display shows a list of languages. The first one is "highlighted" against a black background.

By repeatedly pressing the ⇧ or ⇩ button, you can highlight each language in turn, and bring further languages onto the display; there are 14 in all.

When the desired language is highlighted, press the RED or GREEN button to select it.

Note: **If the language list fails to appear, execute a Reset of the Computer:**

- Hold down the RED button.
- Insert a thin object (e.g. paper clip) into the opening marked RESET on the underside of the unit, and press with it once.
- Release the RED button when the language list appears.

If you have selected the wrong language by accident, carry out the reset procedure then select the correct one.

3. Play a game

Once the language is selected, the screen shows the
chessboard with the pieces in the starting position.

You can now begin a game with the computer. Place the
chess pieces (supplied with the package) on the membrane
board, with White at the end next to the controls. We
suggest you play your first game with White.

Note: If you don't press a control button or a square on
the chessboard during an interval of 5 minutes (or 1
minute if the batteries are low), the display is
"dimmed". The next press restores the brightness.

Play your move
Press with your piece on the squares it is moving *from* and *to*. The computer
gives a "click" in acknowledgement.

To castle: make the king's move, then the rook's move.

For an *en passant* capture: move the capturing pawn, then press the square
of the captured one.

For pawn promotion:

- Carry out the pawn's move.
- Using the ⇦ / ⇨ buttons, display the desired piece type.
- Press RED, GREEN or the promotion square.

Square shown in yellow on the LCD: You have selected this as the "from"
square. (To cancel, press the square again.)

Square shown in red: You are prompted to press this square to carry out the
computer's move or to complete your own "special" move (castling etc.).

If you try to make an illegal move (or press any wrong square or button),
you hear a low-pitched sound. Simply continue as normal.

Execute the computer's move
The move is announced by a sound signal. The LCD shows the piece switching
between the "from" and "to" squares, and the move appears in notation at
the bottom of the display.

To execute the move, press each square as prompted by the red highlighting.
A "ping" announces check.

Retracting and replaying moves

To retract a move, press the ⇦ button, then move the piece back, pressing the squares indicated in red. Then if the move was a capture, you will be prompted to press the captured piece down as you replace it.

To retract a sequence of moves, repeat the above procedure. Alternatively: to retract (e.g.) 5 moves, press ⇦ five times, then press the squares to take back the concluding move of the sequence.

A move or sequence that you have retracted can be replayed in a similar manner, using ⇨ instead of ⇦.

At any point you may resume play from the position on the board, by making a new move or instructing ChessGenius to do so (see Section 8: "Move now")
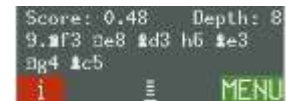
Meaning of symbols in the bottom line

A smiling face indicates that you are to move. A pair of faces shows that the computer is in "2 Players" mode (see Section 8).

A rising/falling column shows that ChessGenius is thinking about its move.

The bar below the symbol indicates which colour moves next.

Info and analysis windows during the chess game

When "i" is shown at the bottom left, the RED button cycles round three "info" displays: the clock times for White and Black, the last few moves played, and the computer's analysis of the position (see example).

The moves shown are the "main line", i.e. the continuation that ChessGenius rates as strongest for both sides. A press on ⇩ switches between this display and the name of the opening with which the game started (available in English and German only).

"Score" gives the evaluation of the position. Here the computer thinks it has an advantage worth nearly half a pawn. The number on the right is the "search depth": when it calculated the main line, ChessGenius was looking 8 "ply" ahead (one ply is a single move by White or Black).

Further examples of items in the info display:

- **Score: −1.85**   The computer has a disadvantage nearly equivalent to 2 pawns.
- **Score: Mate 7**   The computer can force checkmate in 7 more moves.
- **Score: −Mate 4**   The opponent can force checkmate in 4 more moves.
- **Book   6.e3**   The current position and the move 6.e3 are in the computer's "openings book" (see Section 9).

4. Start a new game: Your choices

You can start a new game at any time except during some operations listed in Sections 8-9. A press on the "NEW GAME" button (▷) gives you 4 choices:

- The user plays "up the board" with White..
- The user plays "up the board" with Black.
- Both White and Black are played by the user(s). See Section 8: "2 Players/Analys".
- The Computer enters "Set up" mode. See Section 11: "Setting up a position".

To make your selection, use the ⇧ / ⇩ buttons and confirm with GREEN.

5. System help messages

At any time, for guidance on what to do next, you may press the "?" button to see a scrolling explanatory message.

In game mode, the button shows you all pieces which can move in the current position.

When you select one specific piece and press this button, the computer shows you the squares that the piece can move to in the given position.

6. Switch OFF/ON

The "POWER" button on the control panel places the computer in "standby" mode or switches it "on" again. In "standby" mode, ChessGenius retains the game in its memory, and after switching on you can resume play from the same point.

Note: Except while calculating a move, ChessGenius will enter "standby" mode automatically if there has been no press on a square or button in the last 10 minutes.

If you don't want to use the computer for a lengthy period or if you want to transport it, you can disconnect the power supply completely with the ON/OFF switch (at the back of the computer beneath row 8 of the chessboard). Place the computer in standby mode beforehand, so that your settings and your last game are saved.

7.   Functions of the control buttons

Note: The RED and GREEN buttons have various uses. Their functions in the current situation are indicated in the bottom left and right corners of the screen.

RED   Reverts to the previous LCD display. In normal playing mode, cycles round three "info" displays:

- clock times
- the last few moves played
- analysis of the position.

Confirms a position that the user has been "setting up".

Cancels a change of "level".

The button's current function is indicated at the bottom left of the LCD; "i" denotes "info".

GREEN   Accesses the main menu.

- Selects an item from the menu or other list.
- Confirms a change of "level".

Current function is indicated at the bottom right of the LCD.

▷   Starts a new game.

?   Displays "help" text, stating what the user may do next. At any time, if unsure what to do next, you may press this button to see a "scrolling" explanatory message.

✳   Regulates the "backlight" of the LCD.
The backlighting of the LCD can be adjusted by repeated presses on this button. (Low brightness means increased battery life.)
If powered by fresh batteries, the display is automatically "dimmed" after 5 minutes in which the user has not pressed the membrane chessboard or a control button. With low batteries, the dimming occurs after one minute. The lighting is restored by the next press.

⇦   Retracts a move, or:

- Decreases a parameter number.
- Alters a parameter setting.
- In "Set up" mode: cycles through the various piece types.

Can be held down to "auto-repeat".

⇨   Replays a move that was retracted, or:

- Increases a parameter number.
- Alters a parameter setting.

- In "Set up" mode: cycles through the various piece types.

<mark>Can be held down to "auto-repeat".</mark>

⇧   Navigates the screen, stepping upwards through a list of items; allows "scrolling" to bring further items into view.

- In "Set up" mode: switches between white and black pieces.

⇩   Navigates the screen, stepping down through a list of items; allows "scrolling" to bring further items into view.

- In "analysis" display: switches between main continuation and opening name.
- In "Set up" mode: switches between white and black pieces.

⏻   Switches the computer on, or places it in "standby" mode. In "standby" mode, ChessGenius retains the current game and parameters (e.g. the "level") in its memory, and after switching on again you can resume play from the same point.

Except while calculating a move, ChessGenius will switch off automatically if there has been no press on a square or button in the last 10 minutes.

If you don't want to use the computer for a lengthy period or if you want to transport it, you can disconnect the power supply completely with the ON/OFF switch (at the back of the computer beneath row 8 of the chessboard). Place the computer in standby mode beforehand, so that your settings and your last game are saved.

RESET   Located in a recess on the underside of the unit. Activated by inserting a thin object into the opening. If this is done while the RED button is held down, the settings are restored to the state in which you first acquired the computer.

ON/OFF   The switch located next to the input for the power adaptor, under row 8 of the chessboard. Disconnects the computer from its power source. Use this function if you travel (in this way you avoid switching on accidentally), or if you are storing the computer for a lengthy period of time.

8. Special functions – the main menu

At any time during play when "MENU" is shown at the bottom right of the screen, a press on the GREEN button displays a menu of commands for activating the computer's special functions.

By repeatedly pressing ⇧ or ⇩, you can inspect the full list of functions and highlight each one in turn. To activate a function, highlight it and press GREEN. To return from the menu to the chessboard display, press RED.

Note: Items displayed with grey wording are not currently enabled.

Hint – get a hint
Asks the computer to suggest a move for you. You may accept by playing the move, or reject the suggestion by playing a different one. (To cancel the "hint" display, press RED or GREEN.) Note that the quality of suggestions is dependent on the playing level you have set.

Move now – force the computer to move
If it is your turn, this command makes ChessGenius move next and "swap sides" with you. If ChessGenius is calculating its own move, the command makes it cut short its calculations and play immediately.

Back/Forward all – jump to start or end of the game
Takes you back to the starting position, allowing you to replay the moves of the game with the ⇨ button. If you are at the start already, this command takes you to the end position.

Next best – get an alternative move
Makes the computer retract its last move and play the one that it rates as next best. (The command may then be repeated if desired.)

2 Players/Analys – the computer as referee
Allows you to make moves for both White and Black. The computer will merely give its analysis of the position. To return to human-versus-computer play, select this same item again; alternatively select "Move now" (or start a normal game with the ▷ button).

Play level – choose your playing strengh
Enables you to inspect and alter the computer's level of playing strength. See Section 10.

Options – further settings
Displays a list of parameters (e.g. which side plays "up the board", sound volume, design of pieces for the LCD…) which can be selected and regulated with the arrow buttons. See Section 9.

New game – restart
Enables you to start a new game. Offers you games against the computer with choice of colour. Also gives access to "2 players" or "Set up" mode, for your training or analysis.

Set up position – customized chess positions
Places the computer in "Set up" mode, allowing you to construct a special position on the chessboard. See Section 11.

Save/Load – save and replay your games

Enables you to save up to 12 games to the computer's memory, or to retrieve
a game that was saved previously. See Section 12.

9. The "Options" list

To display the list, select "Options" from the main menu.

Use ⇧ / ⇩ to navigate to an option, and ⇦ / ⇨ to alter the setting. The signs "✔" and "X" indicate whether a feature is "on" or "off". When all desired changes have been made, press RED to return to the main menu.

Turn board – you play with Black
If this option is selected (✔) , Black will play "up the board".

PermanentBrain – ChessGenius calculates continuously
If this feature is "on" (✔), ChessGenius continues calculating during the user's thinking time. If it is "off", the computer's playing strength is reduced but the batteries will last longer.

Tutor – get warnings while playing
If the "Tutor" is activated (✔), the computer may give a warning if you make a dubious move. You can then retract the move or ignore the warning if you prefer.

Note: The "Tutor" is activated automatically if you switch the level to the "Fun" or "Easy" category. See Section 10.

Resign/Draw – more realistic playing experience
With this feature enabled (✔), the computer may (a) offer to resign or (b) offer you a draw, if it thinks appropriate. You may accept the offer or continue playing.

Style – the style of the computer's play
You can choose a "Normal", "Risky" or "Solid" style.

Book – choose the opening book to use
You have the choice of 2 "books" of chess openings for the computer to use. If this option is set to "Off", ChessGenius will not use either book but will calculate its own moves from the start.

Sound – set your volume
There are 4 settings for the volume, including 00% (mute).

Brightness – set the brightness of the display
The LCD display has 5 brightness settings.

Pieces – choose your style of pieces for the display
You have the choice of 4 designs for the chess pieces on the LCD.

Language – set your preferred language
There is a choice of 14 languages for the screen text: English / German / French / Dutch / Italian / Spanish / Polish / Danish / Swedish / Finnish / Norwegian / Czech / Hungarian / Slovak.

10. Levels of playing strength

The levels are divided into 7 categories: "Normal", "Blitz", "Fun", "Easy", "Tourn" (Tournament), "User" and "Find mate". Except in the last 2 cases, there are various numbered levels within the category.

To inspect the level, select "Play level" from the main menu. Then:

- With ⇧ or ⇩, you can switch between managing the category and managing the level number.
- To alter the category or number, use ⇦ / ⇨ .
- To confirm the alteration, press GREEN. (To cancel it, press RED.)

On "Blitz", "Tournament" and "User" levels, each player's clock counts down, showing the amount of time left until the next time control. However, if you lose by overstepping the time limit, you may still continue playing.

In the other level categories, the clock records the total time taken so far.

Normal levels
On these levels, ChessGenius takes a certain average amount of time per move – ranging from virtually instantaneous play on Normal level 00, to 2 minutes per move on level 09.

Blitz levels
Each player is given a certain total amount of thinking time for the whole game (2 minutes for Blitz 00; one hour for Blitz 08).

Fun levels
On these levels the computer moves instantly and makes some deliberate mistakes (most serious on level 00, least serious on 08).

Easy levels
Here ChessGenius plays very quickly, as it cuts short its calculations after examining a fixed number of positions (100 on the lowest level; 40,000 on level 08).

Tournament levels
The first three levels use "Fischer" time controls.

- Tourn 00: Each player's clock counts down from 5 minutes, but is incremented by 3 seconds after each move.
- Tourn 01: Countdown from 25 minutes; increment 10 seconds.
- Tourn 02: Countdown from 1 hour; increment 30 seconds.

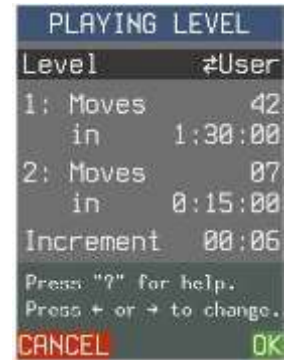Levels 3-4 simulate a "sudden death" finish.

- Tourn 03: Each player must make 30 moves in one hour's thinking time, then receives a further 30 minutes for the rest of the game.
- Tourn 04: 40 moves in 2 hours, then 30 minutes to finish.

Level 5 uses a "classical" time control: 40 moves in the first 2 hours, and 20 moves per hour thereafter.

"User" level

This allows you to customize your own time control by specifying up to 5 parameters. In this example, each player is given 1 hour 30 minutes for the first 42 moves, and 15 minutes for every 7 moves thereafter; there is an "increment" of 6 seconds per move from the start.

Use the ⇧ or ⇩ button to navigate from one parameter to another. Use ⇦ / ⇨ to change the value of the highlighted parameter. The first or second number of moves may be set to "All" (reached by going above 50 or below 01).

"Find mate" level

On this level, ChessGenius searches for the shortest way to force checkmate from the current position. Unless there is a "book" move available, it will not make a move until a forced mate is found or the search reaches its maximum depth.

11. Setting up a position

To construct a special position on the chessboard, begin by selecting "Set up position" from the "New game" menu (see Section 4), or from the main menu (Section 8).

This example illustrates the bottom lines of the main "Set up" screen. Here Black is to move next; the "↓" on the right indicates that White is playing "down the board".

You now have the following possibilities.

Inserting/removing pieces

- The bottom line of the LCD shows the piece that can be inserted or removed.
- To alter the piece type, use ⇦ / ⇨. The colour can be changed with ⇧ or ⇩.
- Press the square of the chessboard as you insert or remove the piece.

The "Set up" menu
The special "Set up" menu is accessed with GREEN. It gives these choices:

- View the "Options (setup)" list (see below).
- Clear all pieces from the chessboard.
- Set up the "New game" position with White to move.
- Abandon the "Set up" procedure and return to normal playing conditions.

To make your selection, use the ⇧ / ⇩ buttons and confirm with GREEN. To revert to the main "Set up" screen, press RED.

Options (setup)
Accessed with GREEN from the "Set up" menu. Use ⇧ or ⇩ to navigate to an option, and ⇦ / ⇨ to alter the setting.

- You can specify which side moves next.
- You can rotate the chessboard. "Turn board ✔" means that Black plays "up".
- You can specify the number of the next move.
- You can define the castling rights for White and Black. In this example, White cannot castle queenside; Black can castle kingside.
- You can select "2 Players" mode. (See Section 8: "2 Players/Analys".)

On finishing your alterations, return to the "Set up" menu with RED.
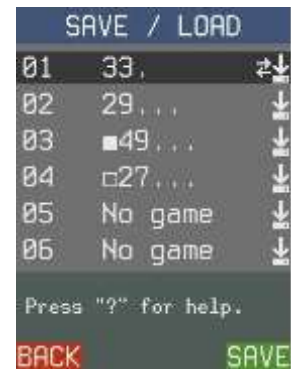
Confirming the position
When the position is ready, confirm it by pressing RED when the main "Set up" screen is shown. You can then play from the position you have set up.

Note: You cannot confirm the position if "Illegal board" is displayed. A press on the "?" button will give a "help" message stating what is wrong, e.g. "The side to move can capture the enemy king. Correct the position."

12. Saving and loading games

Up to 12 games can be saved in ChessGenius's memory and later retrieved. To use this feature, select "Save/Load" from the main menu. The screen then shows a list of memory slots and their contents, as in this example.

In the final position of the game in slot 01, White is to play move 33. In the game in slot 02, Black is to play move 29. Slot 03 contains a sequence that started from a "set up" position with White to move. At the end, Black is to make his 49th move in this sequence. Slots 05 and 06 are vacant.

Use ⇧ or ⇩ to navigate to a memory slot (01-12), then use ⇦ / ⇨ to display SAVE, LOAD and DELETE in turn. When the desired command is shown, press GREEN to select it.

- SAVE places your current game in the chosen memory slot, erasing its previous contents.
- LOAD retrieves the game saved there. You can resume play in this game, or play through the moves with ⇦ / ⇨, etc.
- DELETE erases the game from the slot.
- A press on RED returns you to normal playing conditions.

13. Disclaimer

This extended version of the operation manual is provided for your additional comfort. To keep it up to date in many languages, we are using machine translation services for downloadable manuals.

This user manual was carefully compiled, and its contents carefully checked for accuracy. If, despite all expectation, these instructions nevertheless contain errors, this shall not constitute grounds for any claims.

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